The Hunting Hat

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The Hunting Hat

by lumosatnight

Summary

Sirius and Regulus go on a road trip, slay some monsters, and talk about their shitty childhood (gee, thanks Walburga).

Notes

Disclaimer: I have never actually watched Supernatural. Everything I know about the show is from reading Destiel and Wincest fanfic. BUT THAT SHOULDN'T MATTER because this is a Regius bonding fic with two American bros on a good ol' cross-country road trip 😌 — aka I'm just winging it here.

Prompt: Cowboy Hat

See the end of the work for more notes

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Regulus slumped in the passenger seat as Sirius started the car. Summers on the road were always challenging, falling just on the unbearable side of hot and humid, his sweaty skin sticking unpleasantly to the leather seats where his T-shirt rode up.

After they'd exorcised the demon, they'd dropped off the previously possessed girl at the nearest gas station. Someone would be around to pick her up eventually. Anyway, she wasn't their responsibility anymore. They were hired to deal with the monsters, not with the aftermath.

"Where to next?" asked Sirius, drumming his ringed fingers against the steering wheel.

Regulus pulled out the map and scanned it. "There's a town about 100 miles out. We should be able to make it before sunset."

Sirius shifted the car into reverse and flung his arm to the side, resting it near Regulus's shoulder. It was one of his 'cool moves' that he liked to use on the chicks he picked up in the random towns they stopped at. Regulus rolled his eyes and pushed Sirius's arm off. Something caught his eye in the backseat.

"Really? You kept it?"

"Hey! I wasn't going to let a perfectly good hat go to waste." Sirius tried to grab it, but Regulus snatched it away and dangled it out of reach.

"But *really?* I didn't know you were into hot pink cowboy hats."

Sirius shrugged. "Wasn't saying it was for me."

Regulus raised an eyebrow. "Oh? Are you sure? I think you'd look good in pink." He yanked the cowboy hat down over Sirius's head before he thought better of it. Regulus had the advantage here. With Sirius stuck behind the wheel, Regulus could push and prod him all he liked, and his brother couldn't do anything about it.

"Get off me, you friggin' lunatic!"

The car swerved, and Regulus pulled back reluctantly. However, he made sure the pink hat stayed firmly on Sirius's head. Sirius grumbled but eventually gave in. So predictable; all Regulus had to do was be annoyingly persistent, and eventually Sirius would let him get his way.

"See." Regulus smiled widely, too widely. "It looks good on you."

Sirius made a sort of *harrumph* sound while keeping his eyes glued to the road, as if averting his gaze and pretending Regulus wasn't there would somehow exempt him from the blame game. Sirius turned the music up, some Led Zeppelin song that Regulus was sure they had

already listened to a thousand times, and Regulus took that as Sirius-speak for "I don't want to openly agree with you, so I'm just going to pretend I didn't hear you."

Regulus rolled down the window, set his chin in his palm, and watched the patches of flat, brown landscape flash by.

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"Sooooo…" Regulus made sure to stare intensely at the menu and avoid eye contact with his brother across the table. "Did you want to talk about it or just let it fester until your head explodes?"

"Shut it, Reggie."

Their most recent job had been a water kelpie in Southern Missouri. Regulus had just wanted to talk to it, convince it to stop eating all the local seafood. But then, Sirius had brought out the knife, and it had escalated to an all-out brawl. It had ended with Sirius stabbing the creature in the back as it tried to strangle Regulus. They'd barely managed to stop it from dragging him to its underwater lair.

"Because you know I'm here for you." He slid the menu up until his entire face was hidden behind it. "No matter what."

Sirius didn't respond as expected. Getting Sirius to talk about his feelings and expressing his emotions was about as excruciating as pulling teeth. It wasn't that Regulus was that much better, but at least he *tried.* At least he didn't lock everything away and then throw away the key.

"It's just that…" Sirius started quietly, and Regulus didn't dare lower the menu. "You remember when Mom used to go on those trips? All the damn time. God, when wasn't she on a trip, killing some monster or another? Well, back then, it was — hard." Regulus heard him take a gulp of water and swallow. "Dad wasn't around and you — you were all I had." His voice turned huskier, breaking on the last syllable. "Do you understand?"

Regulus nodded before he realized Sirius couldn't see him behind the menu. He slowly lowered it to find Sirius staring at the table, twisting a napkin between his bony fingers.

"And Mom went off and got killed by a demon, and then Dad left, and you went with him. I thought I'd lost you, Reg, I thought you were gone."

"I wasn't gone," said Regulus, and Sirius finally looked at him, his face open and honest. He hadn't seen Sirius this open since before Mom had pulled him out of school at fourteen and forced him on his first solo hunt. Since then, Sirius always had armour around him, not even letting Regulus see through the gaps.

"No, you came back." Sirius smiled faintly. "But don't you get it? I can't — do that again. I can't lose you. I won't —"

"It's fine, Sirius. I get it."

He did get it, in some weird messed-up way. He was all Sirius had; Sirius was all *he* had. After their mom had died, and their dad had left, it had been the two of them against the world and all its monsters. They could never be one without the other.

“And, what can I get for y’all today?” The waitress stood at the end of their table, pen and notepad in hand. Sirius visibly did a double take as he took in the revealing cut of her uniform.

“Well, sweetheart, why don’t you tell me what’s good here?” he said with a wink. The armour was back, Sirius’s charming smile back in place like it had never left and their conversation already locked in the *do-not-talk-about* box and shoved off to the side in favor of a potential hookup.

Regulus rolled his eyes. Some things never changed.

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“Why do you still have that ridiculous thing?” said Regulus, trailing behind.

Sirius sauntered ahead, checking the path for any sign of the Wendigo and its rampage through town before escaping into the woods. The pink cowboy hat on his head was impossible to miss. If they were trying to stay camouflaged, they were doing a terrible job of it.

“It’s growing on me,” Sirius replied, not turning back to check that Regulus was following. “You know I had a pink hat once. That girl Mary gave it to me. Wanted us to be matching.”

Regulus frowned. “Which one was Mary?” He tried not to pay attention to Sirius and his revolving door of girlfriends. The less he thought about his brother’s sex life, the better.

“C’mon, dude. *Mary.”* He cupped his hands in front of his chest and bounced them a bit. “She had a great rack.”

“Eww gross, Sirius.”

“Hey, if you’re not into that, that’s fine. Whatever floats your boat, man. It’s all good in my book.”

“Please stop talking,” Regulus said through his teeth.

“Like that guy in Leander — what did we call him? The King? Kingsley? — with the *huge* arms. Hey, I get it. Even *I* could be into —”

“Can you get to the point already?” Regulus kicked a rock off the path. Sirius was going to get delightfully acquainted with the bottom of his boot if he didn’t finish his story soon.

“Oh yeah, the hat. Well, Mom made me get rid of it.”

“Get rid of it how?”

“Take it to the woods.” Sirius smiled like it was a funny joke, but it didn’t reach his eyes. “Salt it. Burn it.”

“But it was *a hat,”* Regulus emphasized.

Sirius gave him a look, the *are you dumb?* look that usually had Regulus shouting at him to keep his eyes on the road. “Yeah, I suggest you try getting her to change her mind about something. Especially something she thought no respectable man should wear.”

“She thought a pink hat would make you less manly?” Regulus asked incredulously.

“Yep.”

“Isn’t that like, I don’t know, when a guy doesn’t want to do cowboy because he feels emasculated when the girl is on top?”

Sirius barked out a laugh, loud and obnoxious, almost like a dog. His shoulders shook with the force of it. “Look at you, Reggie. You’re not a prude after all.”

Regulus scowled. “I’m not a virgin. I’ve” — he waved his hand awkwardly toward the tree tops — “done things.”

Sirius snorted. “Sure you have. You’re a real Cassanova, I bet.”

Regulus scowled harder and adjusted the crossbow on his shoulder. “Whatever,” he said, forcing his voice deeper. “Are we going to catch this Wendigo or what?”

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Their next assignment was for an unknown benefactor. That in itself wasn’t uncommon. Lots of good law-abiding citizens didn’t want to be associated with shady business dealings like contracts with the supernatural. What *was* uncommon was the message sent with the invoice.

I think you’ll enjoy this one.

(As if that wasn’t ominous.)

They arrived at the location just as the sun was setting. The Forbidden Forest, it was called — some dense as heck plot of land probably owned by a rich dude and his rich family.

(As if that wasn’t ominous either.)

Sirius was already out of the car, slinging weapons onto his back and making sure the salt bags were full. “Take the gun,” he ordered, flipping open the trunk while Regulus tried to get his bearings. Sirius didn’t care much about those sorts of things, but at least one of them needed to remember where the car was parked later.

“What do you think it is?” Regulus grabbed the gun, counted the bullets, and scratched a couple of protection sigils into the dirt. It never hurt to be too careful.

“We’ll find out when we see it,” grunted Sirius. “This better not take too long. I’m starving.”

As if sensing their presence and not wanting to keep them waiting, a loud wail echoed through the forest. The air grew colder; the night grew darker. Regulus strained to hear over the rustling of the trees, which had started creaking and groaning as the entity got closer.

“Oh, it’s you.”

Regulus’s blood froze. It had been years since he’d heard that voice. The slight condescension, the inevitable disapproval. The screaming matches in the middle of the night. The slammed doors, disappointed frowns, and harsh words.

“Well, well,” said Sirius, facing their attacker head-on, stupid risk-taker that he was. “If it isn’t our favorite mother — in the flesh. Or, well, not so much flesh anymore. Heh.”

“I am your only mother. You would do well to remember,” said the ghost of Walburga Black, floating and translucent. Although much less substantive, she was just as menacing as she had been in life, the rigid lines of her hair matching the harsh lines of her face.

“Unfortunately,” Sirius said just loud enough for Regulus to hear. “C’mon then, Reggie. Let’s gank this son of a bitch.”

“Not the son, just the bitch,” said Regulus, “the original bitch.”

The look on his mother’s face was priceless. Regulus wished ghosts would show up in pictures because he would have loved to document this moment when Regulus, Momma’s boy extraordinaire, insulted her to her face.

“Couldn’t have said it better myself.” Sirius grinned, showing too many teeth, entirely impolite and annoyingly arrogant. He always knew how to push her buttons. “Oh, and one more thing.” Sirius bent down to rummage through the trunk. Regulus checked that he had his lighter and lighter fluid on him. He did. What was Sirius doing?

Sirius reemerged, and Regulus immediately understood. “You ready?” he said, raising the salt-loaded gun. If she said so much as one disparaging word, he was going to put a salt bullet through her incorporeal head.

Sirius tipped the pink cowboy hat, and they stepped forward as one.

End Notes

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